

# A Tale of Two Forests



On the hillside to the east of this valley, old-growth and second-growth forests stand in sharp contrast to each other. The darker, taller trees on the top of the ridge are in a protected ancient forest. Below, the shorter, lighter trees make up a second-growth forest planted in an area once cleared by timber companies. Clear-cut logging was a common practice and widespread until the 1970s.

While harvesting near a road system, loggers generally left a few rows of trees as a visual screen. When the last stands of trees were cut down along this stretch of Highway 101, public concern grew. Environmental groups lobbied to safeguard the primeval coast redwood forest. In the end, public reaction to clear-cutting on the hills helped rally Congress to establish Redwood National Park.



**Old Growth**  
Trees of different ages, sizes, and species characterize the variety found in an old-growth forest. They offer nutrients and shelter for diverse vegetation and wildlife.



**Second Growth**  
The uniform leaf canopy blocks sunlight, creating a dark, tedious landscape with little variation or diversity in plant and animal life.